

FCC Consumer Advisory

Satellite TV (DBS) Subscribers and the DTV Transition

The digital television (DTV) transition refers to the switch from analog to digital broadcast television. After February 17, 2009, full-power television stations in the United States will stop broadcasting in analog, and will continue broadcasting in digital only. The DTV transition has many benefits. It will free up frequencies for police, fire, and emergency rescue communications, provide frequencies for advanced wireless services, and allow TV broadcast stations to offer more programming with better picture and sound quality.

If you have an analog television that receives free over-the-air programming with a broadcast antenna (such as “rabbit ears” on your set or an antenna on your roof), you will need to purchase a digital-to-analog converter box in order to watch digital broadcast television. Each U.S. household is eligible to receive two \$40 coupons to be used toward the purchase of two digital-to-analog converter boxes. (Please note that these coupons will expire 90 days after mailing. For more information on the Coupon Program, visit www.dtv2009.gov, or call 1-888-388-2009 (voice) or 1-877-530-2634 (TTY).)

If you subscribe to satellite TV (also known as “Direct Broadcast Satellite” or “DBS”) and your TVs receive local television stations through your satellite dish, these TVs are already prepared for the DTV transition. However, if you do not receive local broadcast stations through your satellite dish, you may be receiving them with a broadcast antenna, such as rabbit ears or a rooftop antenna. You should check with your satellite TV provider to find out if you can receive local broadcast stations through your satellite dish. If you cannot, or if you choose not to subscribe to a package that provides the local stations through your dish, you may need a digital-to-analog converter box to view digital broadcast programming on an analog TV. You also should check with your provider to find out if satellite TV set-top boxes are available that include a digital broadcast tuner. You may be able to rent or purchase these from your provider, or you may be able to purchase them from an electronics retailer. If your satellite TV set-top box has a digital broadcast tuner, you should not need a separate digital-to-analog converter box to watch digital broadcast programming on an analog TV.

For more information about the DTV transition, go to www.dtv.gov or contact the FCC by e-mailing dtvinfo@fcc.gov; calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY; faxing 1-866-418-0232; or writing to:

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554.



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